



Australian Government

**Department of Families, Housing,
Community Services and Indigenous Affairs**

Mr James Catchpole
Committee Secretary
Joint Standing Committee on Treaties
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Mr Catchpole

Social Security Agreements – Implementation information

I refer to the Committee hearing of 6 February 2012 concerning the tabling of the treaty for the proposed Agreement between Australia and the Republic of Latvia on Social Security.

At the hearing, Committee member Mr John Forrest MP asked for additional information on what Agreements we already have in place, how many we anticipate to have in place, and how many are currently under negotiation.

Australia currently has 27 bilateral social security agreements in force, they are with: Austria, Belgium, Canada, Chile, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Korea, Malta, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland and the USA.

A social security agreement with Hungary has also been signed (7 June 2011) and is expected to commence on 1 October 2012.

Australia has held discussions on social security agreements with Estonia, France and India. We have also had approaches for a social security agreement from Argentina, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Colombia, Israel, the Philippines, Serbia, Turkey and Uruguay.

The Government considers a number of factors in deciding whether to enter into social security agreement negotiations with another country. It is a prerequisite for commencing negotiations that the other country has a compatible social security system and that a social security agreement will be mutually beneficial. Some of these relevant factors are population or customer numbers in Australia and the other country, business links, whole of Government considerations, the bilateral relationship and the costs and benefits.

All requests for new social security agreements are considered and prioritised by the Government.

Yours sincerely

Michalina Stawyskyj
Branch Manager
Social Security Relationships and International Branch

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